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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [LO](#)
SUBJECT: THE DEPUTY SECRETARY'S FEBRUARY 12, 2008
MEETING WITH SLOVAK FOREIGN MINISTER JAN KUBIS

(U) Classified by Deputy Secretary Negroponte, for
reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (U) Participants:

U.S.

The Deputy Secretary
EUR DAS Judith Garber
D Staff Gustavo Delgado
Valda Vikmanis Keller, EUR note taker

Slovakia

FM Jan Kubis
Ambassador Rastislav Kacer
First Secretary Martin Kaco
Chief of Staff Miroslav Jenca

2. (U) SUMMARY. During their February 12 meeting, the Deputy Secretary and Slovak Foreign Minister Kubis discussed the main issues in the bilateral relationship, including the Visa Waiver Program, Kosovo, Afghanistan, missile defense, and the April 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest. Kubis stressed that despite minor differences in Slovak and U.S. views on issues like Kosovo, Slovakia remains a steadfast ally and friend to the United States. He noted plans to meet with the Hungarian American Coalition while in Washington in an effort to ease tensions related to the Hungarian minority in Slovakia. END SUMMARY.

Visa Waiver Program (VWP)

3. (SBU) Kubis thanked the Administration for its efforts to expand VWP and noted the positive steps Slovakia has taken to meet the security requirements set out in VWP legislation, including issuance of biometric passports. Kubis acknowledged that the Slovak refusal rate needs to fall below ten percent, noting that it is well on its way to doing so. During his visit Kubis will also meet with Senator Voinovich for further discussions on VWP.

Afghanistan

4. (U) The Deputy Secretary asked Kubis about Slovakia's willingness to send an Operational Mentor Liaison Team (OMLT) to provide training to the Afghan Army. Kubis responded that this is currently under consideration by the Government of Slovakia (GOS) but a final decision has not been made. The Deputy Secretary noted that he is confident of success in Afghanistan, but stressed that additional assistance from our allies would bring

greater momentum and speed to the process. Kubis said he was hoping for further discussion of this at the NATO Summit in Bucharest and stressed the importance of a balance between military and civilian assistance.

Kosovo

¶5. (C) The Deputy Secretary asked if Slovakia and the U.S. are on the same page with regard to Kosovo. Kubis indicated that differences do exist, noting his need to maneuver between support for a unified EU position and a clear majority in the Slovak parliament opposing a "non-negotiated solution." Kubis believes Kosovo will declare independence on February 17 and asked when the U.S. would recognize it. He also commented on the importance of the EU mission's deployment to Kosovo to take over some of UNMIK's responsibilities. Kubis stressed the need to maintain some umbrella UN presence in Kosovo to provide legitimacy to the EU mission. Kubis himself feels that UN Resolution 1244 provides sufficient legitimacy but feels that there are EU members who need the additional assurance a UN presence would provide. He added that Slovakia plans to increase its KFOR contribution. Kubis unequivocally stated that Slovakia would not be in the first or second wave of EU countries to recognize an independent Kosovo. He speculated that Slovakia would delay recognition while closely monitoring the 120-day transition period.

Missile Defense (MD)

¶6. (C) The Deputy Secretary noted the difference of opinion that exists between PM Fico and President Gasparovic on MD. Kubis explained that Fico's critical comments are merely political statements intended for his domestic audience. Kubis expressed interest in ongoing talks with the Russians and noted that recent comments by Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov in Munich appeared to be more forward leaning on MD than the views expressed by Putin. The Deputy Secretary noted that the Russians are conflicted about

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collaborating with the U.S.

Upcoming Visits

¶7. (SBU) Kubis noted that President Gasparovic would like to meet with President Bush in Washington. Kubis described Gasparovic as a very popular politician likely to win reelection in 2009, and a close ally. He noted that Gasparovic was instrumental in the Slovak decision to increase the number of troops deployed in Afghanistan.

NATO Summit

¶8. (SBU) Kubis asked about U.S. thinking regarding a Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Ukraine and Georgia. He noted that Slovakia, as the NATO contact country for Ukraine, was quite active in its diplomacy in Kiev. The Deputy Secretary responded that no decisions had been made, but promised we would share our thinking in the run up to the Bucharest Summit. Kubis said Slovakia supported MAP for Ukraine and Georgia and invitations to join NATO for Albania, Croatia and Macedonia.

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